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ABSTRACT

This script for an illustrated presentation describes a program for improving Library Media Education Programs for American Indians. These recommendations have been implemented in training institutes in several Pueblos in New Mexico: (1) involving community leaders in recruiting and selecting students; (2) selecting students who have successful prior experience in working with people; (3) conducting technical level training in or near the communities in which students live; (4) using regularly scheduled courses to teach technical level skills needed to operate a small library media center; (5) including practical work experience under the supervision of the instructor or library media specialist; (6) making the development of library media centers one of the instructor's responsibilities; (7) paying students for meeting clearly specified expectations in their course and on-site work; and (8) arranging follow up consultation and continued development for students and library media centers. Slides and transparencies were used to illustrate the implementation of these recommendations. (AP)

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING LIBRARY MEDIA TRAINING AND SERVICES IN RURAL INDIAN COMMUNITIES

(An Illustrated Presentation)

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N. Higgins

I have directed a four year Title IIB Library Training Institute designed to prepare school library media specialists for service in Indian communities.

I currently have a title IIB research grant to study ways of recruiting American Indian and Spanish Surnamed persons into the library media profession.

In today's presentation I will describe selected recommendations for improving library media education programs for American Indians. Lotsee will describe how she has implemented these recommendations in the training institutes and demonstration projects she has directed in several Pueblos in New Mexico.

Screen 1

Transp. #1 | Involve community leaders in recruiting and selecting students.

Recruiting students from minority communities for library media programs is frequently a problem for library educators. One way to improve the recruitment of students is to [transparency]

L. Smith

Screen 2

Slide #1 | Recruiting -- BIA, tribe, Director

To recruit the participants for the Training Institute I first contacted the two BIA Agency Education Directors in New Mexico for advice and assistance in selecting aides for the day schools. For assistance in selecting aides for the community libraries I went to tribal leaders.

N. Higgins

Transp. #2 | Select students who have strong recommendations in doing service work (library, media, teaching, health).

Most people are aware of the fact that the dropout rate of minority students from post secondary education programs is extremely high. We have found that this rate can be reduced through careful selection procedures. In addition to using established admissions requirements, we have found that a student's prior experience in working with people is a good indicator of future success; therefore, we recommend that [transparency].

L. Smith

Slide #2 | BIA principal -- Peer, Appt.

The Agency gave the Institute its official sanctions and contacted the principals at the day schools. The principals, then, either appointed an aide or used a group process in selecting one.

Slide #3 | Criteria - - - -

Here are the criteria we used.

Slide #4 | Demonstrate ability. - -

The participant must [slide]. For example, we preferred those who had indicated a previous interest in library media professions either by means of prior work experience in a library/prior course work or volunteer work.

N. Higgins

L. Smith

Slide #5 | Possess personal characteristics - - -

Slide #6 | Indicate interest to pursue - - -

We looked for self starters. Those that had completed high school and were eligible for admission to a college program, or were already enrolled in higher education courses.

Slide #7 | Be employed as an aide

The way we implemented this recommendation which came out of Norm's study was to accept only those aides who were to [slide].

Slide #8 | Aide Marian Laweka

Marian Laweka at Zuni is an example. She was already working as an aide. She, like the others, had proved her ability to work well with people.

Slide #9 | Be an Indian

And, of course, in this Institute [slide] because they shared the culture and aspirations of the community and they spoke the native language of the community.

N. Higgins

Transp. #3 | Conduct technical level training in or near the communities in which students live and will work

Training for library media programs is usually assumed to be the province of college and university campuses. There are several reasons for rethinking the sites where training is to be provided. Lotsee will illustrate some of the advantages of implementing our next recommendation. [Transparency]

Transp. #4 | Use regularly scheduled courses to teach library media skills needed to operate a small library media center.

The design of effective training usually presents problems for library-media educators. The more successful programs in our study built their program around regularly scheduled courses, as opposed to developing special programs. The recommendation related to program design is [transparency].

L. Smith

Slide #10

Most Indian communities in New Mexico are in isolated, rural areas. The schools are so small that they will never be able to hire a professional person with an MLS or any other graduate degree. A trained aide is 100% better than nothing

N. Higgins

L. Smith

Slide #11 | $

By conducting the training on-site, you will get very good and highly motivated participants who would not normally be in a formal academic program because many of them have families and cannot leave their homes to go to school. Many cannot pursue an education for economic reasons. Distances are just too great to commute.

Slide #12 | Courses

The courses in our institution were basic library/media courses. The summer program was flexible, which permitted us to fill in with those things we thought needed attention. We used regularly scheduled courses, but adapted them for teaching technical level skills. Throughout the training students also took a practicum.

Slide #13 | Theory and Practice

The courses were a mix of theory and practice. Both the courses and the practicum provided the students with the opportunity to implement their newly acquired knowledge of both library and media skills.

Slide #14 | Boy and Program of Studies

The courses were offered through the University of N.M.'s Extension Division for regular academic credit and could be applied to a degree program.

N. Higgins

Transp. #5 | Include practical work experience under the supervision of the instructor or carefully selected library-media specialist.

Students in any school program continuely question the "relevance" of what they are learning in their courses. For this reason it is not surprising that students desire a great deal of practical experiences in their training. For this and other reasons we recommend that educators [transparency].

L. Smith

Slide #15 | Practicum

We implemented this recommendation through our practicum (read slide)

Slide #16 | Santa Clara exterior

The work experience of each student varied because each school was different. At Santa Clara, for example, [slide].

Slide #17 | Aide/Boys dry mounting

The aide became heavily involve in production of materials.

Slide #18 | San Felipe exterior

At San Felipe, [slide]

N. Higgins

L. Smith

Slide #19 | Cordelia story telling

The aide spent more time in library instruction and story telling

Slide #20 | Reggie video

But she did take time to teach her principal how to use the video camera.

Slide #21 | San Ildefonso

At San Ildefonso,

Slide #22 | Mella, students

The aide taught the students how to use the AV equipment.

Slide #23 | Dictionary use

Most of the aides began to teach library skills.

Slide #24 | Zuni chart

Several of them assisted teachers with the development of visual materials, such as this one, used to teach the Zuni language.

N. Higgins

Transp. #6 | Make the development of library-media centers one of the instructor's responsibilities.

Highly related to the practicum experience is the need to involve library media faculty in the development of library-media centers. We recommend that you [transparency].

L. Smith

Slide #25 | Catalog cards

And, of course, those catalog cards never go away.

Slide #26 | Instructor

The instructor had to work with each aide in her own school in order to supervise the practicum; it meant she had to be very diplomatic and work well with a variety of people and in a variety of situations. It called for a lot of PR. In many instances the development of a library-media center was a challenge for the instructor.

Slide #27 | San Juan exterior

At San Juan Pueblo there was no school library.

Slide #28 | Bare room

We usurped this room, which was being used for storage.

N. Higgins

L. Smith

Slide #29 | Bare room

It was pretty dismal.

Slide #30 | Room

The aide, working with the Instructor, and using a lot of ingenuity,

Slide #31 | Room

produced this transformation in a few months.

Slide #32 | Jemez exterior

Jemez Day School had a new mobile unit designated to be the school's media center.

Slide #33 | Jemez mess

Thousands of books were piled into it in total disarray and uncataloged.

Slide #34 | Jemez neat

By the end of the Institute the aide and the Instructor had organized and arranged it into . . .

N. Higgins

L. Smith

Slide #35 | Jemez neat

a smooth running and efficient media center.

Slide #36 | Snake

the aide was not even deterred by the rattlesnake that appeared behind one of those stacks of books one day.

Transp. #7 | Pay students for meeting clearly specified expectations in their course work and on-site practicum work.

Most of the students who participated in the programs of studies received stipends. In administering the stipends we recommend [transparency].

Slide #37 | Title II-B

The source of funding for our Institute was Title II-B of the Higher Education Act. The students were expected to attend classes regularly, earn grades of "C" or better in all courses, and work one-half time in the library in order to obtain their stipend.

Slide #38 |

Those who did not meet the expectations of the program were dropped. This is important in maintaining the moral of other students in the program.

N. Higgins

Transp. #8 | Arrange follow-up consultation and continued development for students and library media centers.

Few, if any, education programs are able to teach everything a student needs to know before they graduate. For this reason we recommend [transparency].

L. Smith

Slide #39 | Continuing technical assistance

This need for continuing technical assistance is perhaps the most difficult to fulfill.

Slide #40 | Aide phone

Our aides frequently call upon State Library consultants, their university instructors and other professionals for help in solving their problems encountered after the Institute ended.

Slide #41 |

For example, buying audio-visual equipment.

Slide #42 |

Or what to do about a censorship problem.

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